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*What is the main cause of the Indian and Pakistani disputes, and how have both countries been affected?*

The Indian and Pakistani conflicts have mostly been caused by religious differences that led to larger problems. The basic difference between Hindus and Muslims led to idealistic differences. These differences led to the conflict in Kashmir, which is a major on going conflict between the two nations. An effect of these conflicts the raising of militaries, which led to more conflict, because India can raise larger armies than Pakistan. The large difference in the size of the armies led to Pakistans development of nuclear weapons. This has caused greater tension in the area, because both countries could easily destroy each other with WMD’s. Overall, the conflict has stunted growth in the two countries and has slowed the development of the area.

*Why did the world take such large interest in Indian policy?*

India is a very large country, and is the most populous democracy in the world, western nations feel that having a large democratic nation thrive could mean good things for the spread of democracies. They have a large military presence in the region. They, for the most part, have a shaky peace with all of their neighbors, but it appears that the peace in south asia could break at any time. For these reasons, India is a very important country to many nations. Also they lie in the middle of a melting pot of nations armed with nuclear weapons, sitting precariously on the edge of peace. Another reason India is so important to the west is that they have always remained neutral. If India, a military superpower, allied with Russia or China, the result could be very dangerous to the U.S. and to world stability.

*How have internal issues in Afghanistan affected the regions stability?*

The wars in Afghanistan, and the terrifying Taliban government, have placed large amounts of pressure on Pakistan as Taliban influences creep across the border. Conflict in Afghanistan has also strained Pakistans economy, because they cannot support the numbers of refugees coming in. The sour history between Afghanistan and Pakistan adds to the trouble, with both nations struggling to move past a history of conflict between each other.